

# STAR OF THE EAST

A Journal issued monthly for liberal thought, the help of self and others by the practice of concentration of mind; in Unity with the Universal Soul.

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Edited by SISTER AVABAMIA.

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## How to Best Serve God.

When we know that we are working out our salvation in whatever place we are we shall see that faithfulness to duty is a holy service to God, and as soon as we have fulfilled our mission there another field for work will be open.

I have very often been asked if one should leave one's home and family to go out and serve God. I have given, and I will still give, the answer that to conscientiously care for one's family, care for and educate one's children, teach them Godliness, and the path of righteousness, is the highest service to God that father and mother can render, and they are not asked, neither by God nor should they be asked by man, to perform any other mission until their family were able to take care of itself, before we try to do any other work for humanity. People who have assumed the responsibility of parenthood should centralise all their powers upon the welfare of their children, in order to teach them the real meaning of life. Parents who go out of their sphere of parenthood to "missionary for God" take away that much time and help from their children. Parents should live holy lives, they should be examples of love and devotion to their children, and they would serve God as much as anyone who has renounced the world to serve God.

To raise a family is to become attached and bound upon this plane, but he who has that mission should see to it that he (or she) filled it well. Many people feel that they must take part in this missionary cause and the other, and they spend their time outside instead of giving to those whom they have brought into this expression of life. Such is wrong, and the children will suffer from it. Parents cannot become renunciates as long as they have children as small as to need daily care and protection, and if there is a real desire to serve God, that can best be done by training them to understand the law of God and live it.

Parents should not feel home life as a burden, but see in their position the highest responsibility in this body, and so live that God in all things be praised. He who wishes to serve God must know that such service first begins with one's own home and self.

Vedanta teaches that one cannot be a true teacher until one has unfolded so that one lives what one teaches, and thereby shows the example to the world that it be true. As long as we are attached to it, and to the world, we cannot live the life which is required to be a true teacher.

As long as people live sex lives and bear children, they cannot devote their powers to the attainment of God-knowledge, for one must use one's forces alone for God-unfoldment in order to be an example.

I like to give a few lines on this subject from the Gospel of the Lord, Sri Rama Krishna, which He has spoken to His Disciples, which reads as follows:—"A householder (the head of the family) should take care of his children, and at the same time he should think of them as Baby Krishna, or as Children of God. Serve your father as God, and your mother as the Divine Mother. After realising God, if a man lives with a wife he has no physical relations with her. Both live like Bhaktas or true devotees.

They talk spiritual things, and spend their time in thinking of God and caring for His Bhaktas (children). They serve God, "who dwells in all beings."

One of the disciples, who had listened to the Lord's words, asked Him: "How long should a father have to perform his duties in his home?"

To this the Master answered by saying: "You must bring up your children, sustain your wife, save enough to maintain your family after your death. If you did not do this you would be heartless and cruel."

Another question was asked the Bhagavan—"How long should one maintain one's children?"—and to this He answered: "Until they have passed the age of minority." "When a young bird," says the Lord, "is able to take care of itself, it pecks at the parent bird if it tries to come near it."

Another Disciple asked the Master—"What is one's duty to one's wife?"—and the Bhagavan answered: "As long as you live you should give her spiritual advice, sustain and care for her, and if she is faithful you should save up enough to make her comfortable after your death."

This will show that Vedanta does not approve of that people (men and women) who have a family to care for should assume duties of an abstract nature, but, to the contrary, raise their children, and in this way unattach themselves from the bonds before they try to teach others.

Therefore, charity and true service of God "begins at home."

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### Lesson in Reading and Self Study.

We have tried to show in our previous issues that reading is the seeking after God, and that we should understand that we commune with Him in all things, as thought is but the expression of "His breath."

When we read, we should look beyond things of which we read and have our minds on the object we seek.

Let us not forget that methods are but the various pathways, by all of which we reach the same goal. This lesson we would like to give to the seeking after God, and to have our thoughts upon that point and no other.

When we read, we only open the door to the communion with the eternal soul, and contemplation and meditation will find God as it will reveal God in us. If we meet together with the fixed purpose of learning more of God (ourselves), we shall feel that God is in the room where we assemble before we get there, and we shall find that our eyes will be opened more and more to the secrets of life.

All things which we discern are conditions which "are but dreams," but, as soon as we find God within us, we will no longer allow these dreams to have dominion over us, but we sweep them to the side and go right into our inner selves, and there we will find no dominion of conditions, but the fulness of the God-power. Do not think that if you fill your mind with "the letter" that you advance, as that is only done when you can lay aside the book and go in and live God, see God, hear God, and know God. The search after God is to seek the goal, and the methods should not circumstance us to limit God, as God is all; and he who sees it need not delay his or her God-life by the slow steps as those have to do who have not become awakened to the truth that we are "God's" now as much as we will be, for God is incarnate in us, and this power is waiting for the understanding to let it burst forth to His glory in us.

Away with disease, away with darkness, away with poverty, away with all that which holds the human soul in ignorance as to its divinity here and now. These are the thoughts which all seekers for God must have when they enter the reading-room and open the book in which they might be told how to find Him.

Methods and rules for those who are as yet in darkness as to their own position in relation to God, are needed, but him who has awakened we ask to go direct into the great God-consciousness within you and you need not be delayed on the road like those are who can take but a small morsel of the Divine power for expression at the time; go by all the by-ways and keep the straight road right into the bosom of your divine mother-God, and you shall find that bosom filled with the love of which you have never realised before.

Let this lesson be a lesson filled with life, and let it be a seeking and finding of God now, and do not think that you have to do so much or so much, but also understand that you have to bring your body in tune with your seeking mind, and therefore there must be peace in the body as well as in the mind.

Seek in every line and word you read for the great blending of the divine with your soul, and be in silence afterwards that God might be able to speak to you so that you might hear and become risen.

Let not reading be a filling of the mind for a time, but let it be the lamp by which you are lighted into the sacred chambers of the heart of the Lord. The subject for meditation after our reading must be the finding of God in myself and all things.

### To the Pilgrims.

Beloved,—At the shrine of devotion I often meet with thee, as thy soul is my soul, as all are God and the universe His abode. Every part of nature listens when God speaketh, and all things feed upon the bounty of His love, and at the foot of the Altar (the heart of man) there this great blessing is distributed. Canst thou not hear the voice of thyself who speaketh in all things? Canst thou not see thyself in the mirror of all things, and canst thou not understand that thou art God of the beginning and throughout? When thou thinkest, all things in heaven and upon earth make ready to respond unto itself, which is thyself, for all things come unto thee from thyself.

Pilgrims are always moving from one light to the other, their shrine is in the heart of the Lord, and they become the sucklings from the Divine breast of our mother-Lord, God, and the closer we remain in Her bosom the more we become fed on Her life. Angels bend over thee when thou art at the feet of God, and when thou bow beneath the Altar the light from their Divine faces bewreath thy brows. Holy moments, holy life, the realisation of which lifts man above everything which holds him confined to matter. Oh, for more understanding of the Divine oneness!

White-robed souls hover about thee in silence, to administer to thee like servants to their masters. Oh! be still often, retire into thy own heart often, and the harmony of heaven and earth and all things of God shall blend into one with thee, and thy life will become heavenly upon earth. Hosts are singing songs in honor of our Divine Mother, and to the Lord God, who are one and the same, and to the honor of the Divine Incarnates who have given in and through flesh the light to the race.

Rejoice in your heart, and meet with us at the Pilgrim's Altar, and receive the overshadowing power from God. Peace be unto thee.

ALBA ODEGAARD.

### "Thought of Freedom brings Freedom."

"It is good for a man to cherish the idea that he is free. 'I am free! I am free!'—if one always says this one is sure to be free. On the other hand, he who always thinks that he is in bondage brings bondage upon himself in the end. The weak-minded man who always says, 'I am a sinner,' is sure to have a fall. A man should rather say, 'I repeat the holy name of God: how can there be any sin in me, or bondage in the world?'"

—From the Gospel of RAMA KRISHNA.  
Adoration to the Lord.—

"O Infinite, Devas-Lord, Universe's Abode; Thou art the Imperishable, the Effect and the Cause, and what that is beyond. Thou art the Original, the Lord, and the Oncient Purusha, the Superb Prop

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of the Cosmos. Thou are the Knower, and the Knowable, the Superb Asylum. By Thee, O Infinite-formed, is the Cosmos filled."—BHAGAVAD-GITA.

By the request of a number of our Sydney students of the Vedanta, and for the benefit of our Australian students of Vedanta to come, we will publish once more the most beautiful poem written by our Revered Master, the late Swami Sri Vivekananda, entitled,

### "The SONG OF THE SANNYASIN."

Wake up the note that had its birth  
Far off where worldly taint can never reach;  
In mountain caves, and glades of forest deep,  
Whose calm no sigh for lust, or wealth, or fame,  
Could ever dare to break; where rolled the stream  
Of knowledge, truth, and bliss that follows both,  
Sing high that note Sannyasin bold. Say—  
"Om tat sat Om."

Strike off thy fetters: Bonds that bind thee down,  
Of shining gold, or darker, baser ore;  
Love, hate-good-bad and all the dual throng.  
Know slave is slave, caressed or whipped, not free;  
For fetters, tho' of gold, are not less strong to bind.  
Then off with them, Sannyasin bold. Say—  
"Om tat sat Om."

Let darkness go; the will-o'-wisp that leads  
With blinking light to pile more gloom on gloom.  
This thirst for life forever quench; it drags  
From birth to death, and death to birth the soul;  
He conquers all who conquers self. Know this,  
And never yield, Sannyasin bold, say—  
"Om tat sat Om."

"Who sows must reap," they say, and cause must  
bring  
The sure Effect: good, good; bad, bad; and none  
escape the law,  
But whosoever wear the form  
Must wear the chain: too true, but far beyond  
Both name and form is Atman ever free.  
Know thou art that Sannyasin bold. Say—  
"Om tat sat Om."

They know not truth, who dream such vacant  
dreams,  
As father, mother, children, wife, and friend.  
The sexless Self. Whose father He? Whose child?  
Whose friend, whose foe is He? Who is but one?  
The Self is all, naught else exists;  
And thou are that Sannyasin bold. Say—  
"Om tat sat Om."

Where seekest thou? The freedom, friend, this  
world  
In books and temples vain thy search,  
Nor that can give. Thine only is the hand that  
holds  
The rope that drags thee on. Then cease lament.  
Let go thy hold, Sannyasin bold. Say—  
"Om tat sat Om."

There is but one—the Free, the Knower-Self,  
Without a name, without a form or stain; In  
Him is Maya dreaming all this dream.

The witness; He appears as Nature's soul.  
Know thou art that Sannyasin bold. Say—  
"Om tat sat Om."

Have thou no home? What home can hold thee,  
friend?  
The sky thy roof, the grass thy bed; and food?—  
What chance may bring, well-cooked or ill; judge  
not.  
No food or drink can taint the noble Self.  
Which knows itself. Like rolling rivers, be  
Thou ever free, Sannyasin bold. Say—  
"Om tat sat Om."

Few only know the truth. The rest will hate  
And laugh at thee, great one; but pay no heed.  
Go thou, the free, from place to place, and help  
Them out of darkness, Mayas veil.  
Without the fear of pain or search of pleasure go  
Beyond them both, Sannyasin bold. Say—  
"Om tat sat Om."

Say "Peace to all. From me no danger be  
To aught that lives; in those that dwell on high,  
In those who lowly creep. I am the Self in all.  
All life, both here and there, do I renounce,  
And heavens, earths and hells, all hopes and fears."  
Thus cut thy bonds, Sannyasin bold. Say—  
"Om tat sat Om."

This poem, taken from the "Jnana Yoga," by Swami Vivekananda, strikes the keynote of Vedanta, Complete Renunciation, for those who expect to become teachers of the world, and also all who expect to know and live in the Self. Please carefully study every line and word, for it is full of "priceless pearls." Let those in America and elsewhere, who have our number for last February, read it, and again re-read it, as the more it is studied, the greater will be the light one receives from it.

### From Our Field of Work in Sydney.

Our work in this place is now closed, and in the closing, which took place on Sunday, the 27th of September, wonderful interest and devotion was manifested from the people. We had the hall filled, and we could see genuine regret at our leaving. We received a most beautiful bound address, and some offerings for our fund for the work, and the heart of the people was warm with kindness towards us. On the same evening we organised a Club for the study of Vedanta in this place, and the number of people who signed their names as members was very large and far beyond the expectation; and I feel sure that the work will go on in this place, although there is no one who is free enough from their duties of family to come out as a teacher, nor does anyone know enough of Vedanta to be an exponent of it as well in life as in words. When one reaches the hearts of the people of Australia they beat with warmth for one's welfare, and I am thankful to God for so many people who have come out and embraced this wonderful teaching.

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The Club will meet here every Thursday for reading of Vedanta books, also papers on Vedanta, and for the purpose of learning how to receive the life in and by silence.

We have splendid people on our board of officers, of whom none is unfamiliar with the study of sacred subjects, and some of them have studied for many years; so that it is not like as if we were absolutely in want of information on the subject. Our president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, as well as all the rest, are beautiful characters and very sincere and earnest souls, who will do their best to learn all they can for self, and for the benefit of others. Our work has borne fruit here in a way, and as the people of Sydney have just got a taste of the liberality and beauty of the Vedanta teachings, I feel sure that many more will join our fold when we return to this place from our sojourn in New Zealand.

Let all our readers give us their good thoughts in this work, as we will not leave this country until we have introduced the liberal teaching in as many places as we possibly can visit, for it is so very much needed that we cannot leave for India until Vedanta is known here to a degree, anyway. This is the time for sowing, as the harvest is due, and the rain of the spirit and sunshine of Divine love is falling all the time.

We have had two meetings of the Club since I closed the work here, and they have been well attended and great interest has been manifested in them. Last night, October the 8th, the Club had its second meeting, to a well-filled house, and wonderful harmony prevailed and great unity and concord was manifested, and I was told after the meeting that more names had been given for membership. I gave my last talk to my beloved students and the Club, and I felt as though a mother was about to leave her children to depend upon themselves. This is well, for growth alone can come by personal effort; but we shall meet again.

We leave for New Zealand on the 14th instant. Peace be with all of us.

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### Letter to Our Readers.

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No one who has not been in Australia can imagine the wonderful beauty and capability of it, and if one is only in the cities one will remain in ignorance of what this country really is, for one must go out in the nature of it to receive the revelation of its wonders.

I mentioned to you in my last letter of the Mountains (what I have seen of them). The wonder and beauty which one comes in contact with here is not mountains only, for as soon as one comes a little

outside the city one comes in contact with indescribable grandeur. I never saw such a variety of wild flowers, and such as I have not seen in other countries in which I have been, for, so far, I have seen very few wild flowers here like that of other countries. Here is a marvellous area of land, which is not built up nor cultivated, and I am told that, although this country is larger than the United States, there is no larger population than that of the city of New York.

I have had a visit to the natives of this country (the "aboriginals"), known all over the world for their remarkable warfare with boomerangs, spears, etc., and when I visited them I made up my mind to have them show me their way of throwing the boomerang, and it is wonderful to see indeed. The boomerang is a weapon cut out in a half-moon shape and made very thin, with edges sharp like knives. The points are also very sharp, so that they very readily penetrate the flesh of man or animal. They throw it high in the air so that it circles and returns back at their feet, and they stand still in one place. It is perfectly wonderful to see their marksmanship, and one can very clearly see how dangerous such people must be. They are very black of hue, and their faces shine in the sun as though they were dipped in oil, and they are of medium height, broad-shouldered, and well-built. Their noses are very flat, and their lips (particularly the lower) are heavily "double." They are cunning, and will not answer you on any question pertaining to themselves and their habits among themselves, as they try to draw your attention to some other subject.

The Government gives them a piece of land, where they live and get along as they please, "and the Government had to compel them to wear clothes, as they prefer to go without a stitch of clothing," so they were clothed and looked very well indeed. Their women (they call them "Gins") are very shy, and hide themselves (in most cases) from visitors, and you cannot get a word from them. They do beautiful bead-work, and eagerly offer it for sale to strangers. They seem to appreciate tobacco, and they do not refuse if it is offered to them, and their little picaninnies love to receive candy and sweetmeats. There is a mission on the reservation, and we were told by the keeper that "they are very devotional." In New Zealand we shall come in contact with another kind of native, and we shall be in a position to introduce them and their various habits to our friends on the other side before we leave Australia altogether.

SISTER AVABAMIA.

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